

Remarks

Claims are pending and stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a). Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to broaden their scope. Applicants assert that the currently pending claims are in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 20-25, and 27-28 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (US Pat 5,259,026) in view of Daly (US Pat 5,222,128). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As presented to the Examiner in the response of January 7, 2004, Johnson fails to teach that redirection of the incoming call occurs automatically, without intervention from the user. The Examiner agreed by stating in the Office Action of March 25, 2004 that Johnson does not specifically teach the feature of automatically redirecting phone calls to the new directory number without intervention by a calling party. To account for this deficiency of Johnson, the Examiner introduced the Solot reference (US Pat 5,644,625) and stated that it would have been obvious to combine Solot with Johnson to provide for automatic redirection.

To address this rejection in the response of June 25, 2004, Applicants amended the claims and argued that neither Johnson nor Solot disclosed a temporarily inoperative directory number whereby the temporarily inoperative directory number is retained for routing a subsequent communication thereto after the disruption has been resolved. The Office Action now states that Daly discloses temporarily inoperative directory numbers. However, the Examiner has failed to account for the fact that neither Johnson nor Daly provides for automatic redirection during the disruption, and thus for the automatic return to the retained directory number once the disruption has been resolved. As noted above, the Examiner has conceded that Johnson does not disclose such automatic features. Daly also fails to disclose such automatic features.

Daly only discloses that redirection occurs once the network service provider technician for the SSSR tool enters a command to the switch to invoke the redirection upon the subscriber informing the network service provider that redirection is necessary. Likewise, the redirection is “undone” so that the calls are sent to the non-redirected

directory number only once the subscriber has informed the network service provide to undo redirection and the network serviced provider technician for the SSSR tool enters a command to the switch to undo the redirection. This is repeated several times within Daly, such as at col. 3, lines 58-68 and col. 10, line 63- col. 11, line 27. Thus, it is evident that Daly does not provide for automatic activation and deactivation of redirection.

It should be further noted that revising the current rejection to further include the Solot reference in conjunction with the Johnson and Daly references will still fail to render the claims obvious because none of these references teach that the redirection is automatic during the temporary inoperability. As recited in the claims, automatic redirection during the period of temporary inoperability means that the redirection occurs automatically during the inoperability and then automatically stops once the inoperability has been resolved such that the retained directory number can be used for the subsequent calls. As a first point, it is believed that Solot fails to disclose an automatic redirect without user intervention, as decision block 115 of FIG. 2 appears to be receiving input from the caller as to whether the system should thereafter automatically dial a new number or whether the caller can dial a new number himself. However, for the sake of argument, even if Solot does disclose automatic redirection, Johnson cannot be modified in this way to stop redirection since the original directory number of Johnson has been replaced altogether. Such modification would produce an inoperable result and would therefore be impermissible.

Furthermore, Solot does not contemplate stopping redirection within the system providing redirection as the redirecting system is at the user end of the PSTN and is not a function of the switch and related database of the communication network. The system of Solot is only responsive to and completely relies upon messages about changed or deleted numbers being provided from the telephone company (see col. 5, lines 35-42) to the end user system, and therefore, the system doing redirection in Solot does not maintain whether directory numbers are operable or not. Additionally, as the system of Solot relies on the phone company for changes, it is not clearly disclosed in Solot that numbers are retained for use after the inoperability has been resolved.

Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 20-25, 27, and 28 are allowable over the cited references singly and in combination for at least these reasons.

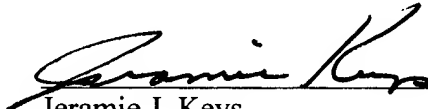
Conclusion

Applicants assert that the application including claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-38, 20-25, and 27-28 is now in condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the amendments and remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees are believed due. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,

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